START

The Environmental Restoration of Hanford

Facts

Expedited Cleanup Project

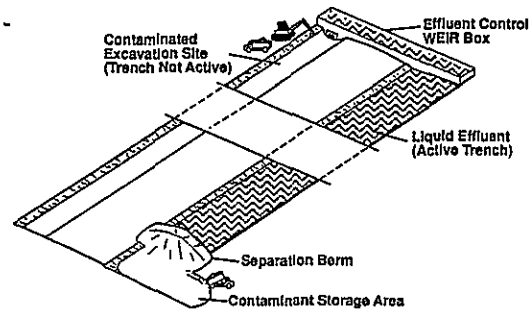
300 Area Process Trenches

In 1975, the 316-5 Process Trenches were constructed and began receiving both radioactive and hazardous (chemical) liquids from processes in the 300 Area. The contaminants include uranium, cadmium, nickel, lead, mercury, copper, chromium, silver, trichloroethylene and chloroform. Some of these contaminants are in the shallow groundwater and soil beneath the trenches.

The concentrations of hazardous constituents have been significantly reduced in comparison to earlier process related discharges. Water, mostly from air conditioning units, is still sent to the trenches. This water picks up the contaminants in the soil and move them toward the river. Once they start moving, the contaminants are able to migrate through the groundwater and into the Columbia River. Richland's public water supply is taken from the river three miles downstream.

In this cleanup activity, the contaminated soils from the bottom of the trenches would be removed and isolated. This would have a positive environmental benefit by reducing the amount of contaminants that could move into the groundwater and eventually the river. Additionally, the volume of water that is being sent to the trenches will be reduced by almost 85% over the next few years. The discharges to the trenches will be eliminated when an effluent treatment system is installed.

Sediment Removal and Consolidation



No additional information about the trenches is needed before the cleanup plan is written. The cleanup plan is being prepared, as are supporting permits and safety documents. The public should be able to review this plan in the spring. If approved, digging up the contaminated soil can start this summer and the project can be completed by this fall.

For further information about this project, contact one of the following people;

EPA (lead regulatory agency): Dave Einan at 509-376-3883

DOE: Bob Stewart at 509-376-6192

Ecology (support regulatory agency): David Nylander at 509-546-2977

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